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## DISCOVERY IN THE RUINS OF KILLYON.

BY T. L. COOKE, ESQ.

[Read at the Meeting of March 6th.]

As the ancient monastic establishment of Killyon, in the King's County, owes its origin to St. Ciaran, the patron saint of Ossory and first Bishop of Saighir, particulars relating to it may interest the Kilkenny Archæological Society; especially as in a few years it is probable there will not be a trace of this ancient religious establishment remaining, excepting such as may be preserved in the archives of learned Associations. The only portion of the building now standing is a small and solitary gable wall, surrounded by indistinct vestiges of foundation stones. Some ten or twelve years ago the gate-house, with a wall about twelve feet high, which enclosed one side of the court-yard, were standing; as was also a small round flanking tower at one of the corners of the quadrangle. The loop-holes of this last mentioned tower commanded the exterior side of the wall on two faces of the enclosure. The gate-house was square, and the gate itself was capable of being very firmly secured, for there were diagonal holes running through the masonry on each side, apparently intended for the reception of chains.

This place was called Killyon, or according to its proper orthography, *Cill Liadhain* (*Cill Liadhain*), because St. Ciaran, the elder, of Saighir (now Serkieran), established a nunnery here in the early half of the sixth century, for his mother, St. Liadania, and some pious ladies who accompanied her. Her name, *Liadhain*, which is pronounced as if written *Leean*, having *cill* (a cell or place of retirement) prefixed to it, forms the modern appellation Killyon. Of the ancient history of Killyon little is known beyond what I have now mentioned. The account given of this place by Archdall and Lanigan is very meagre, and Ware does not name it at all. It must, however, have been heretofore a place of very extensive hospitality, for in 1846 and 1847, a farmer, who then held the site of this religious house, dug to a considerable depth the whole area included within its precincts, and discovered an underground apartment, which, in its day, evidently served as a cellar. It contained an iron key and a number of broken bottles, made of dark-coloured glass, and each of which might have held about a pint of our imperial measure, or probably rather less, owing to the space occupied by their high-crowned bottoms. There were also found there various fragments of tall and narrow drinking-glasses. I send a sketch of what the bottles seem to have been when perfect. The same farmer also exhumed here a vast number of the short horns of the old Irish kine, and likewise a cooking hearth, in which meat was used to be dressed, in great abundance, as it would seem. This hearth was situated in the middle of the court-yard,

and it apparently was not sheltered from the weather. I saw the place shortly after the discovery. The hearth was a circular basin of about ten feet diameter and two and a-half feet deep, having its bottom and sides lined with granite rocks, each containing at least one or two cubic feet. Close by the edges of this pit, and on the surface of the ground around it, were several similar rocks, which, as well as the lining of the basin, exhibited marks of having been exposed to intense heat. There was a considerable quantity of charcoal mixed with ashes all around.

Keating, *History of Ireland*, Book I., p. 134, translation of 1723, writing of Fionn and the Fianna Eirion, or Irish militia, says:—"The method of dressing their meat was very particular; for when they had success in hunting, it was their custom, in the forenoon, to send their huntsman with what they had killed to a proper place where there was plenty of wood and water. Here they kindled great fires, into which their way was to throw a number of large stones, where they were to continue till they were red hot. Then they applied themselves to dig two great pits in the earth, into one of which, upon the bottom, they used to lay some of these hot stones as a pavement. Upon them they would place the raw flesh bound up hard in green sedge or bull-rushes. Over these bundles was fixed another layer of hot stones; then a quantity of flesh; and this method was observed till the pit was full. In this manner their flesh was sodden or stewed till it was fit to eat, and then they uncovered it, and when the hole was emptied they began their meal." An ox was often dressed entire in this manner, the hot stones being placed within the carcase. These rude cooking places are called by the peasantry *Falachda Fianna* (*Falachda Fianna*), Fenian Encampments. But their true appellation seems to be that given in "O'Reilly's Irish Dictionary," viz., *Broclach* (*Brothlach*), a word probably compounded of *bpoč* fire, or *bpoč* flesh, and *leac* a flag. O'Reilly defines *Broclach* as a pit or hole made in the earth in which the ancient Irish militia used to dress their meat. This primitive mode of preparing food was used as lately as September, 1836, in the Sandwich Islands; for Dr. Ruschenberger (Narrative of a Voyage Round the World, Vol. I., p. 336), writes of the Hawaiians, "the feast consisted of dogs, poultry, pigs, &c., *luaned*; that is, after being carefully wrapped in leaves of the *Ti* plant, cooked by being buried amidst stones heated for the purpose."

There was also discovered at Killyon, about the same time, and by the same person, a lump of yellowish metallic alloy, resembling pyrites, —also other large and antique-shaped iron keys, and a part of a large and thick iron knife or sword were found by him. These several articles are now in my collection. Those made of iron are, as may be supposed, much oxidized. I send a sketch of the smallest of the keys. It is of the same size as the original.

It is to be lamented that this once interesting ruin may be said almost no longer to exist. Killyon is the estate of a gentleman resident

in the County of Kildare. The gate-house, the round flanking tower, and the wall which enclosed the bawn, have all vanished. These were barbarously pulled down, and the stones of which they were composed, as also the granite rocks belonging to the curious ancient cooking-hearth, were all broken up and used as "metal" for repairing the neighbouring roads, or as building materials for a new police barrack which has been erected hard by. Nothing now remains to mark the site of the once celebrated nunnery of St. Liadhain, except the crumbling ruin of one small and insignificant gable wall. The narrow-minded industry of the occupier of Killyon has here erased every trace which could bear testimony to the pious zeal of the nun, or to the teeming hospitality of the *biadhac* (*biadhach*) of former times.

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## SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PROPER ARRANGEMENT AND PRESERVATION OF THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS IN ST. CANICE'S CATHEDRAL.

BY JOHN G. A. PRIM.

*[Read at the Meeting of September 4th.]*

There are few local members of this Society, I am sure, who need to be told what deep reasons the Kilkenny archæologist possesses for gratitude to the memory of Bishop Pococke for his preservation of the ancient tombs in our venerable Cathedral. Not only local antiquaries, however, but the local public at large, look upon these monuments of mediæval art and piety, with a just pride, esteeming them as interesting mementos of the past, and valuable historical records. I am not, nevertheless, quite sure that even those of the public who are imbued with a taste for antiquities, are generally aware of the extent of injury to which the disposition of the monuments made, with a far different view, by Bishop Pococke, has exposed them, and that some of the effigial tombs which the worthy prelate rescued from the obscurity in which they had so long lain, heaped promiscuously in a disused side-chapel, were incongruously and erroneously arranged by those whom he employed to set them up. Such is the fact, however; and in bringing this subject under the notice of the Society, I have in view the accomplishment of two salient objects—first, to expose the errors fallen into in putting up the misplaced altar-tombs, in the hope that the hint may lead to a new and more correct arrangement of them; and secondly, to attain the preservation of the more humble, though scarcely less inter-

## ADDENDUM.

Page 229, after last line add—

Since the foregoing was in print I have been informed by the Rev. James Graves, that Ledwich has committed a twofold mistake in stating that the "*Sacri Lus*" was lost, and that the poems were composed by the young gentlemen of Kilkenny College. The volume in question is still to be found in Primate Marsh's Library, Class K. 3. Tab. 5. No. 9; and is entitled "*Sacri Lus* *In Vsum* Scholæ Kilkenniensis. Dublinii: Typis Regiis, & Venum dantur apud Josephum Wilde. c1o locL. \* \* \*". The date is defective, having been partly cut away by the binder. The book is in small quarto, and is imperfect, ending at p. 64; it consists of Latin poetry in elegiac measure, chiefly on Scripture subjects. On the fly-leaf is written, in an old hand, "Daniel Mead, ex dono Geo. Pigott." On the title, "Mich. Jephson"; whose library was purchased by Primate Marsh.

## CORRIGENDA.

- p. 117, l. 8, for "Anglesea" read "Anglesea".
- p. 133, l. 27, for "these" read "those".
- p. 142, l. 34, for "of" read "of".
- p. 148, note, l. 1, after "Phœnician" dele „.
- p. 157, l. 17, for "*Muillend*" read "*Muilend*".
- ib., l. 24, for "*Maelodron*" read "*Maelodran*".
- p. 164, l. 11, for "*Muilenu*" read "*Muilenn*".
- p. 174, l. 35, for "connection" read "connexion".
- p. 177, l. 9, for "*barry of four*" read "*four barrulets*".
- p. 182, l. 27, for "Edward" read "Edmond".
- p. 187, l. 31, for "twenty-four" read "fourteen".
- p. 191, l. 27, after "of" insert "the".
- p. 192, l. 37, after "tenure" dele „.
- p. 193, ll. 44, 45, for "two trefoil-headed niches" read "a shallow canopy".
- p. 195, ll. 14, 22, for "Sugard" read "Ingard".
- p. 198, l. 8, for "acre" read "Loftus acre".
- ib., l. 18, for "Ballymagin" read "Ballymagir".
- p. 200, l. 9, after "rain" dele „.
- p. 213, l. 39, for "meta" read "metal".
- p. 216, l. 34, for "Vol. I." read "Vol. II".
- ib., l. 35, for "*luaned*" read "*luæued*".
- p. 222, l. 15, for "magnificent" read "magnificent".
- p. 240, l. 39, after "brothers" dele „.
- p. 260, l. 32, for "of Nassau" read "daughter of the first Duke of Beaufort".